



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

Valuing the Police: Preparedness Inspection

**Cleveland Police
July 2011**

Purpose of the review

The Police Service, along with all other parts of the public sector, is facing its biggest financial challenge in a generation. This could be seen either as an opportunity to innovate and refresh – or as a reason to continue as is and see services cut back.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has been heavily involved in monitoring the Service's reaction and preparedness for cutting crime while reducing costs. As part of this, in Spring 2011 we carried out an inspection of all 43 forces and authorities in England and Wales, to assess:

- how they are planning to meet the financial challenge; and
- what the impact will be on the service they provide to the public.

This report summarises the findings for Cleveland Police. A thematic report, *Adapting to Austerity*, which brings together findings from all 43 forces, is also available from www.hmic.gov.uk.

Findings for Cleveland Police

What is the financial challenge in Cleveland?

Cleveland Police and Cleveland Police Authority reported that they are facing a **£23.1m** cash reduction to their budget over the four years of the comprehensive spending review period (2011/12–14/15). In real terms (ie when inflation is taken into account), this equates to 14% of their gross revenue expenditure.

Are the force and authority prepared to meet this financial challenge?

The force and authority showed clear understanding of the scale of the financial challenge facing them, and have considered a full range of options in developing a plan to meet it. This plan covers the four years of the comprehensive spending review period, and outlines how each workstream or project will deliver savings against agreed timescales. Every element has been assessed as 'red', 'amber' or 'green', depending on how firm the savings are.

It should be noted that during 2010 the Cleveland Police and Authority entered into an innovative arrangement ('Project I') to outsource call handling and a range of back office functions (such as HR and finance). This resulted in over 400 police staff posts transferring to a new, third-party employer.

At the time of inspection, only Project I was being implemented. Robust project management was in place to ensure that it yielded the expected savings on schedule. However, there was no project management for any other element of the plan (although they were all described in detail and subject to scrutiny); nor was there overarching programme management to ensure that the overall plan was on track.

What will be the impact on the number of police officers and staff?

Cleveland Police planned to make the following changes to its workforce numbers.

	Police Officers	Police Staff	PCSO
31 March 2010 (actual)	1,724	711	193
31 March 2015 (proposed)	1,500	253	183

March 2010 figures have been used as the baseline, because most forces began a recruitment freeze in that year, and as a result workforce numbers started to fall. The proposed figures shown for March 2015 were provided to HMIC by the force in June 2011.

The force and authority's plans for the workforce will continue to be refined as the change programme progresses.

What will be the impact on service to the public?

The force and authority have committed to maintaining 'frontline service provision' (although their definition of 'frontline' needs to be clarified). They have looked at all proposed changes to assess the possible impact on the service the force delivers to its communities.

The force and authority have consulted with the public about their financial plan, and there is evidence that feedback from this has influenced the change programme. The force also had a draft communication strategy in place, which will assist in ensuring consistent and timely information is distributed both internally and externally.

Does the force have targets to reduce crime and ASB?

The first job of the police is to reduce crime and keep the peace; and in 2010, Theresa May, the Home Secretary, stated that she expects forces and authorities to make financial cuts while still reducing crime and without damaging the front line.

Cleveland's *Policing Plan* includes objectives to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB) in the coming year.

